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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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***GOVERNORS TELL CONGRESS TO TREAD CAREFULLY***  
***51 Governors Voice Concern Over Move to Usurp***  
***Local Control of National Guard***

PHOENIX – Governors nationwide have joined together in opposition to a provision – slipped into the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act – which would take away local control of the state's National Guard troops. Their strong opposition was voiced in a letter from the National Governors Association (NGA) to the leaders of Congress.

The provision is problematic because it interferes with the constitutional role of governors as commanders in chief of their state's Guard units. Instead, it would allow the President to take control of a state's National Guard during natural and manmade disasters in any part of the United States, and to do so without consulting the governor of that state. The provision was drafted and added to the bill without discussion with or input from the governors. Further, the President already has this authority; the vague definitions of what constitutes a "serious emergency" will only lead to confusion.

The letter says, in part:

"We take very seriously our constitutional duty to protect our citizens and lead our Guard. We are responsible for the safety and welfare of our citizens and are in the best position to coordinate all resources to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. The current process by which we use our National Guard in emergencies and request federal assistance when necessary works well and should not be changed."

The National Guard has excelled in its dual mission as a combat force overseas and as a front-line disaster response force in their home states during emergencies. The system is working; this is a request by some members of Congress to fix a problem that does not exist.

Governor Janet Napolitano is the current Chair of the NGA, and is a signatory to the letter, along with the governors of 50 other states and U.S. territories.

A copy of the full letter is attached, and is also available at [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org).